

2 SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 PROJECT LOCATION

The project site is located on approximately 40 acres on the grounds of the 430-acre San Quentin State Prison (SQSP) in Marin County, California. SQSP is bounded by Interstate 580 and the City of San Rafael to the north, U.S. Highway 101 and the City of Larkspur to the west, San Francisco Bay to the south, and the Richmond–San Rafael Bridge and small unincorporated neighborhood of San Quentin Village to the east. Regional access to the project site is provided by Interstate 580 via the Richmond–San Rafael Bridge and by U.S. Highway 101. Local access to SQSP is provided by Main Street through San Quentin Village to the East Gate and by Sir Francis Drake Boulevard to the West Gate.

2.2 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The facilities at SQSP were not designed to accommodate the large numbers of inmates who have been sentenced to be condemned. Original condemned-inmate facilities were designed to accommodate 68 inmates. There are currently more than 600 inmates on condemned row. Condemned inmates are housed in antiquated facilities not designed to maintain the appropriate controls, separation, and security required for a violent and aggressive inmate population. These condemned inmates are a danger and risk to correctional officers, to other inmates, and to the public. The main objective of the project is to meet CDC's safety and security requirements for operations and emergency services to handle this current and future inmate population. Other principal objectives of the project are to meet these state requirements:

- California Penal Code (CPC) Section 3600: all male condemned inmates in California must be housed at the California prison designated for the execution of the death penalty;
- CPC Section 3603: all court-ordered executions in California must be carried out within the walls of SQSP;
- Thompson Decree: establishes minimum conditions for condemned inmates at SQSP; and
- CDC safety and security guidelines for operations and emergency services.

The Legislature authorized funds to place the project at SQSP in 2003.

2.3 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

As discussed in Chapter 3 of the Draft EIR, the project includes construction of a new condemned inmate complex (CIC) that would house 1,408 condemned male inmates. The CIC would be devoted to the safe and secure housing of condemned inmates at SQSP and would consist of two semi-autonomous maximum security facilities with housing, service, and support space. The semi-autonomous facilities would be physically separated from each other by perimeter security (i.e., fencing and walls) and would incorporate a modified version of CDC's highly secure 180-degree housing units. A lethal electrified fence would be constructed around the CIC.

The CIC would be physically separated from the rest of the prison by an outer patrol road, perimeter security fencing, and an inner patrol road. Guard towers approximately 34 feet tall would be located along the perimeter fence line at intervals of approximately 650 feet. High-mast lighting, a central kitchen, mental health services building, two facility program support-services buildings, a complex-services

building, and a correctional treatment center would be constructed within the secure perimeter of the CIC. These buildings and facilities would provide space for the required services and programs.

Perimeter guard towers, a support-services building, visitor/staff processing center, communications building, central building maintenance facility, warehouse spaces, and parking would be located on the grounds of SQSP but outside the secure perimeter of the CIC. A vehicle sally port would provide vehicle and truck access to the complex gate. Parking spaces would be provided adjacent to the vehicle sally port. An employee parking lot would be located in the northeastern portion of the project site, just north of the visitor/staff processing center.

2.4 FACILITY CHARACTERISTICS

The State has mandated that all male condemned inmates be housed at SQSP; therefore, the new CIC must be located on the grounds of SQSP. The amount of developable land area on SQSP is severely limited because of the presence of prison facilities, housing, and topographical features. As a result, the new CIC is proposed on approximately 40 acres in the western portion of the SQSP property. CDC has undertaken a lengthy and exhaustive process of laying out project facilities and buildings based on existing site constraints. This process resulted in the development of two site design options: Single-level CIC Design Option (single level) and Stacked CIC Design Option (stacked).

To allow CDC more design flexibility and to consider potential environmental impacts of each option, the Draft EIR evaluated the environmental impacts of implementing either design option. The same facilities and programs (i.e., correctional treatment center, canteen, mental health treatment) would be provided under each design option. However, the location and design of some buildings would vary slightly under each option. Please refer to Section 3.6.4 of the Draft EIR for a detailed description of the design options.

2.5 OPERATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Under both design options, the CIC would be surrounded by a perimeter security system consisting of double cyclone fences topped with barbed tape, a lethal electrified fence located between the double fences, and six 34-foot-tall guard towers spaced at approximately 600-foot intervals.

Visitors meeting with inmates housed at CIC would be identified, screened, and searched at the visitor processing center at the existing east gate and then transported by shuttle to the CIC. All staff and visitors entering the secure perimeter of the CIC would be processed through the visitor/staff processing building. Inmate visitation at the CIC would be scheduled with visiting staff, based on current policy.

2.6 PROJECT STAFFING

Based on CDC's staffing ratios for custody staff as proposed in the Governor's 2004–2005 budget, an estimated 648 staff would be required if the new CIC was at maximum capacity (1,408 condemned inmates). The cell space would allow for 1,024 condemned inmates, which would require an estimated 576 staff.

The CIC, like the rest of SQSP, would operate 24 hours a day, year-round, with three 8-hour shifts (watches) and an overlapping administrative shift.